

MINUTES - Heath Planning Board Meeting

Town of Heath

Planning Board

Via Zoom

Oct 01, 2025, at 7:00 pm

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 7:15 pm

ATTENDANCE:

Douglas Mason - Chair

Cindie Garland – Boards Clerk

Bob Dane

Will Emmet

New Business:

Solar Plan Proposal –

- Doug provided an update on his ongoing solar panel installation project, which he is completing with assistance from an electrician and a colleague from a Boston-based solar company.
- He noted that he is preparing a project map for presentation at the next Planning Board meeting, at which time he will recuse himself from related deliberations and decisions.

Old Business:

Special Permit – ANR – 141 and 144 Sumner Stetson Road

- The Board discussed the pending signing of the Summer Stetson Road ANR document, with a 21-day deadline approaching. Cindie agreed to verify that all “draft” and “preliminary” labels had been removed prior to signing, as confirmed by the applicant.
- The Board also discussed a prior land survey for a property on Sumner Stetson Road, following concerns about the accuracy of the survey’s measurements. Doug discussed the distinctions between two-dimensional and three-dimensional mapping methods and described using Google Earth for preliminary measurement comparisons.
- The board agreed to sign the final survey’s at JRMC.

Zoning Notice Publication Issue

- The Board discussed the zoning notice publication that did not meet required public notice standards, necessitating re-publication. Members discussed the options to address the matter through the next Annual Town Meeting (ATM) or paying approximately \$900 for immediate re-publication. The Select Board will make the final determination on how to proceed.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU’s)

- ADUs was deferred to the next meeting.

- Doug made a motion to discuss ADU bylaws at the Nov meeting. Bob moved. Will second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye" and Bob "Aye". The motion passes unanimously.

Subdivision Regulations

- Bob reported on the progress reviewing subdivision regulations and indicated he would be examining state examples and requirements over the coming months.
- Updates to the subdivision regulations does not need to go to ATM.

Large Battery Backup Storage

- The Board also agreed to revisit regulations concerning large battery backup installations at the Nov meeting. Doug made a motion to discuss regulations for large battery backup installations at the Nov meeting. Bob moved. Will second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye" and Bob "Aye". The motion passes unanimously.

5G Wireless and Regulations

- The Board agreed to postpone discussion of 5G infrastructure until December.
- Doug made a motion to discuss regulations for 5G Wireless at the Nov meeting. Bob moved. Will second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye" and Bob "Aye". The motion passes unanimously.

Short-Term Rental Regulations

- Doug initiated a discussion on potential short-term rental regulations and associated taxation. He referenced the Town of Charlemont's approach, which limits non-resident ownership to 25 rental properties, and suggested exploring similar provisions locally.
- The Board discussed potential measures such as registration requirements and restrictions on out-of-town ownership. Members noted that well-regulated, well-maintained rentals could increase property values and generate additional tax revenue, balanced against concerns like housing shortages for seasonal workers and rising rents.

Previous Meeting Minutes

- Doug led a review of previous meeting minutes from Oct 01, 2025.
- Doug made a motion to approve the minutes. Bob moved. Will second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye" and Bob "Aye". Minutes passes unanimously.

Next Meeting will be held Nov 5, 2025 @ 7:00 pm via Zoom.

Adjournment

- Doug made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 pm. Bob Moved. Will Second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye" and Bob "Aye". The meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM with unanimous approval.